

Amendments to the Claims

I claim:

1. (cancelled)
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19. (cancelled)
20. (cancelled)

21. (new) A litho printing press comprising at least one printing station which has thereon a non-planar, multiple layer, flexible printing plate called a "Mike Plate or "Modified Mike Plate," a first rotatable cylinder called the plate cylinder to which said multi layer flexible printing plate is secured, and said multiple layer flexible printing plate has an outermost layer called the applicator which receives a paste-type, oil-based litho ink from the printing station ink fountain via an applicator roller means, said outermost layer being adhesively secured to an innermost layer of a different material called the carrier by a see-through adhesive, and where said outermost layer is cut in the pre-press department of the printing plate to provide spaced cut-out segments and adjacent projecting portions which receive the litho ink from said applicator means, and a second rotatable cylinder called the blanket cylinder which receives the litho ink from said projections of the multi layer flexible printing plate on the plate cylinder in a nip therewith and in turn deposits said litho ink upon desired areas of the substrate held in contact in a nip therewith by a third rotatable cylinder called the impression cylinder, or if there is no blanket cylinder on the print station, said projections deposit the litho ink thereon in a nip directly upon the desired areas of the substrate held in contact with said projections by the impression cylinder, there being no dampener or dampening solution on said printing station to complicate the litho press construct or operation as the case with conventional litho printing presses.

22. (new) The litho printing press of claim 21 where all the layers of the multi-layer flexible printing plate called the "Mike Plate" are see-through layers, so that in the pre-press department of the printing plant before said "Mike Plate" is secured to said plate cylinder of said litho printing press, a template containing a cut-pattern can be positioned beneath the innermost layer and be visible through said outermost layer so that it can be cut through to the outermost surface of the innermost layer.

23. (new) The litho printing press of claim 21 where the multi layer flexible printing plate called the "Modified Mike Plate" has a see-through outermost layer, but whose innermost layer is opaque and whose outer surface is imaged with a cut-pattern, so it serves as its own template.

24. (new) A method for printing paste-type, oil-based litho ink on a substrate which comprises the steps of:

assembling a multi layer flexible printing plate to become a "Mike Plate" or "Modified Mike Plate" in the pre-press department of the printing plate, and which is composed of an outermost see-through layer for receiving and applying litho ink in appropriate nips, said see-through outermost layer being adhesively secured by a see-through adhesive to an innermost layer of a different material by placing the components of said printing plate on a support surface, with said outermost layer on top, and cutting through only the outermost layer along a cut-pattern to create litho ink receiving and applying projections on said outermost layer; and

providing a litho printing press with an ink fountain and an ink applicator means to convey the paste-type oil-based litho ink received from said ink fountain and deposit it on said projections of the "Mike Plate" or "Modified Mike Plate" secured to an adjacent rotatable cylinder called the plate cylinder, and which in turn deposits the litho ink upon it either onto a second rotatable cylinder called the blanket cylinder in a nip therewith, which in turn deposits said oil-based litho ink onto the substrate held in contact therewith in another nip by a third rotatable cylinder called the impression cylinder, or directly upon the substrate held in contact therewith by the impression cylinder, thereby eliminating the dampener and dampening solution.

25. (new) The method of claim 24 wherein the outermost layer of said multi layer flexible printing plate is a see-through translucent or transparent synthetic plastic, and said cutting operation is manually conducted on said outermost layer following cut lines on a template positioned under a transparent synthetic plastic innermost layer adhesively secured by a see-through adhesive to said outermost layer to produce said "Mike Plate."

26. (new) The method of claim 24 wherein the outermost layer of said multi layer flexible printing plate is a see-through translucent or transparent synthetic plastic, and said cutting operation is manually conducted on said outermost layer following cut lines on an opaque imaged innermost layer which thus serves as its own template and which is adhesively secured to said outermost layer by a see-through adhesive to produce said "Modified Mike Plate."

27. (new) The method of claim 24 wherein there is provided a programmable automatic cutting machine called a CAD-CAM having a cutting edge which cuts through the outermost layer to create said "Mike Plate" or "Modified Mike Plate."

28. (new) The method of claim 24 wherein the thickness of the outermost layer of the multi layer flexible printing plate is in the range of .015 -.050".

29. (new) The method of claim 24 wherein the thickness of the see-through adhesive, the intermediate layer, is about .001".

30. (new) The method of claim 24 where the see-through adhesive is pressure-sensitive, and is pre-applied to the bottom surface of the outermost layer before it arrives in the pre-press department of the printing plant.

31. (new) The method of claim 24 wherein the thickness of the innermost layer is in the range of about .004-.020".

32. (new) The method of claim 24 where the total thickness of the "Mike Plate" or "Modified Mike Plate" is about .030".

33. (new) The litho printing press of claim 21 where there is no dampener in contact with the projections of the "Mike Plate" or "Modified Mike Plate" on the plate cylinder of the printing stations, no dampening solution, and no blanket cylinder, so that said projections deposit the oil-based litho ink thereon directly upon the substrate.

34. (new) The litho printing plate of claim 21 where all the materials comprising a "Mike Plate" or "Modified Mike Plate" are selected for ease of assembly in the pre-press department of the printing plant with standard pre-press equipment and techniques, ease of securing to the plate cylinder, durability enabling use for long runs and reruns, speed and ease of replacement if damaged, and low cost.

35. (new) The litho printing press of claim 21 where the "Mike Plate" or "Modified Mike Plate" and its elimination of the dampening solution on a printing station results in more vibrant color and greater color consistency of the ink on the substrate throughout a run at the same ink weight, film thickness and cost, or the same color strength, color variation on the substrate throughout a run at less ink weight, film thickness and cost.

36. (new) A litho printing press comprising one or more paste-type, oil-based litho ink printing stations, each of which has an ink fountain and ink applicator means for conveying said litho ink from said ink fountain and depositing it upon the projections of a "Mike Plate" or "Modified Mike Plate" secured to an adjacent first rotatable cylinder called the plate cylinder in a nip therewith, and a second rotatable cylinder called the impression cylinder adjacent to the plate cylinder over which passes the substrate to receive said litho ink in a subsequent nip with the ink-carrying projections of the "Mike Plate" or "Modified Mike Plate" on said plate cylinder, there being no dampener or dampening solution needed on said printing station to complicate the litho press construct or operation as is the case with conventional litho printing presses.